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Using web based resources to bridge the communication gap between parents and teachers

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USING WEB BASED RESOURCES TO BRIDGE THE COMMUNICATION GAP BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEACHERS

A Project

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California State University,

San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment

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in

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this project is to produce a school website that promotes and enhances communication between the school and parents. By creating a website for Preston Elementary, we are taking a step closer to bridging the gap between the school and the community.

This project looks at different aspects of what is needed to have a successful and effective site. Research was done on the issue of digital divide among people. How do people that do not have Internet access benefit from it and how do we bridge this gap. Also, research was done on schools that already have a website and how they are using it to communicate with their parents. The research also looks at how to properly design a web page so that it is effective in its cause. Training teachers to incorporate and implement technology in the classroom is also vital issue.

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DEDICATION

I would like to thank Lupita and my family for encouraging, supporting, believing in me and sticking by me through everything.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background Information

With over $20 billion spent so far on bringing computers into America's classrooms, it is crucial that teachers integrate technology into their classrooms (Hoffman, 2000). The amount spent on computers will continue to grow as more schools gear technology towards achievement, assessment, alignment, accountability, access and analysis (CEO Forum, 2001). According to a study done by Glen and Neil Russell (1997), computers are essential in schools to help students develop skills on which they can build upon later. Because students have already adopted computer usages to complete their homework, it was easy for students to apply computer use throughout education (Czubaj, 2000). The Russels (1997) also stated that students were motivated toward their education when they used computers.

There are several stakeholders in technology. Educators are the first of these stakeholders in technology. Not only can technology be used to help target students needs more efficiently, it can also provide teachers with more job satisfaction. Teacher isolation is

reduced by encouraging communication with outside peers, community members, experts, and parents. Two important benefits a teacher can gain by utilizing technology are, increased collaboration and communication and more constructive time spent on administrative tasks, hence improving efficiency (CEO Forum, 2001).

Parents and the community are the second stakeholders in technology. By involving members of the community, schools are experiencing positive results in students' achievement. According to the CEO Forum (2001) parents and the community can benefit from technology by:

1. Increasing family involvement in the education process.
2. Increasing community and corporate involvement in the education process.
3. Increasing interaction between k-12 and higher education.
4. Increasing technology awareness and prepared workforce.

We live in a society highly dependent on technology where paper and pencils are no longer the norm. This Information Age that we are in makes it easier for us to communicate in quicker and cheaper ways. The computer allows us to access information globally. Students are

able to access information on millions of computers and collaborate and communicate with people around the world. Universities, schools, and institutions are providing supportive and cyberspace curriculum through the web (Czubaj, 2000). These schools are using web pages as a mean of communicating to the public on events and current information about the school.

Not only are school web pages beneficial to parents in terms of information, they also serve as a good tool for communicating between teachers and parents. According to the survey done on teachers at Preston Elementary, teachers are working on an average of 50 hours a week. With such long work hours for teachers and so many parents working longer hours or different hours, it is hard to have parent conference during the normal after school hours. Also, for parents who share custody of their children, it is a difficult task making sure both parents are well informed of what is due and of upcoming events. Parents can look at individual teachers' website to check up on what assignments are due and what is expected of their child. This will help parents reinforce and further their child's academic success.

School web sites can also serve as a resource center for parents and teachers. Teachers are often crunched for

time. Having important documents on the web site can help teachers fill out paper work and plan better without having to look around for the paperwork. Parents can also benefit from a resource site. Parents can assign and give their child more practice work that they can find from the Internet. There are numerous sites that can offer this. Scott Foresman, Preston's Math adopted program offers extra explanation, pretest, and quizzes on the web to help students practice at home. Parents will not have to spend money on books that offer their child more practice on concepts taught in their classroom. All they have to do is print out pages from the Internet or do an online assessment through the programs offered. This will serve as an essential tool for both parents and teachers to use to conserve time and money.

The Rialto Unified School District located in San Bernardino County is moving towards a more integrated technological curriculum. The district had allocated $936,361 to the purchase of computers and equipment alone for the 2001-2002 school year. Overall, the district had spent $2,808,876 to support educational technology within the district (Rialto Unified School District Tech Plan, 2002). There are 17 Elementary schools and 11 secondary schools in this district. The district on the average has

two computers per classroom for kindergarten through third grade and four to five computers for fourth and fifth grade classes.

Preston Elementary belongs to the Rialto School District. Preston exceeds the average computers per classroom with five computers per classroom. Preston has for numerous of years developed a technology plan that incorporated the use of computers in the classroom. These computers were mainly use to help expand lessons and reinforce concepts taught. Although Preston Elementary had jumped on the new technological age wagon, it had not set up a website that would enhance the communication and growth of the school.

Statement of the Problem

Educators are always trying to find more productive ways to utilize their time. One main complaint among educators is that parents do not support learning at home. There are numerous reasons why this situation exists. Some parents do not know what is expected of their child academically. Parents do not know the homework and standards that the child needs to meet before moving onto the next grade due to the fact that they don't have time to talk to teachers. Another reason could be that some

parents do not know where to go to get help for their child.

A second complaint among teachers is that they spend too much time looking for paperwork that needs to be filled out that they lose a lot of vital time lesson planning and assessing student work. Schools can be one of the most disorganized places to work. Although teachers have their own way of doing things in the classroom, paperwork is something they really have no control over. When searching for paperwork, it seems like it is never in the same place it was before. This becomes an endless search teachers would rather do without.

Purpose and Overview of the Project

Teachers' and parents' complaints could easily be addressed through a school website. A school website will provide parents with information about the school and any upcoming events. It will also inform parents of what is going on in their child's classroom by accessing the teacher's web page and looking up what is for homework or what the class is working on this week. This can be a bridge between parents and teachers. Teachers can also email certain parents concerning their child's progress or behavior and parents can also email teachers to check up

on their child. This website will serve as a newsletter to parents of upcoming events happening at school. It can also provide parents will extra resources they can use to help their child.

This website can also serve as a tool for teachers. Teachers will be able to access information from this website. Teachers can download or print out important documents that will be stored on this page. Teachers will not have to wait to get to school to find the paper work necessary to file poor work notices for their students. Instead, they can just retrieve it online and get it done at home or even on vacation. This is really handy for teachers because they will no longer have to search for paperwork because it will all be a click away.

A web page for Preston Elementary already exists, although it only has the address of the school, the mascot, and the mission statement. Adding what are essential needs for parents and teachers will be beneficial to everyone in the long run. This website will increase communication between parents and teachers, allow teachers to access needed materials outside of school hours, and build a union between the community and school.

Expected Outcomes of the Use of This Project

This website will bridge communication gaps between the community and the school. It will provide parents with answers to frequently asked questions and it will also provide parents and students with resources to help enhance learning at home. Parents will be able to find information that they need and be updated on current events at school. Parents will also be able to continuously track their child's progress in school.

This website will also allow teachers to access paperwork and resources at home. This will maximize their time and reduce the amount of time spent on looking for something because everything will be right there on the Internet. Teachers will also be able to communicate with parents on a regular basis through email.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to understand what the effects of a web page will have on the school and community, several areas of relevant literature were consulted. The first thing to consider is the issue of the digital divide. How do we offer the benefits of technology to those who simply don't have? The second thing to consider is the use of technology in the community and school. The third thing to consider is the in-service teachers are receiving to maintain and utilize the web site in the most beneficial way to both parents and teachers. The fourth thing that must be considered is how to effectively design a website that will be successful.

Digital Divide

There has been much discussion on the impact of digital divide on education. It is crucial that we understand the seriousness of this and make suggestions to correct the matter. Alcide Honore defines digital divide as "the disparity in access to technology that exists across demographic groups" (2000, p. 1). In other words, this means the difference in access to technology due to socio economic standings. As schools and communities

around the world increasingly go online, those that already have access to the Internet are profiting while those that don't are being left behind causing the digital divide.

Factors such as income, demographics and education are primarily influencing the digital divide today. Households of all ethnic groups are twice as likely to own a computer as they were in 1994. Internet access has also increased in all ethnic groups (Honore, 2000). Although demographics categories are important in the definition of digital divide, education and income also plays a big part. Education and age are the most significant variables in predicting Internet access at home or work (Honore, 2000). "The National Telecommunications and Information Administration reports that those with a college degree or higher are more than eight times as likely to have a computer at home (68% versus 7.9%) and more than sixteen times as likely to have home internet access as those without college education (48.9% versus 3.1%)" (Honore, 2000, p. 5). It is predicted that by the year 2005, household income will become the key contributing factor to the widening digital divide that separates those with Internet access from those without (Lipke, 2000). Although it seems that the higher the income, the higher the rate

of internet access is true, statistics show that income is not the only leading factor in the cause of the digital divide.

There are numerous reasons for the demographic inequality in online access. One reason is that because low-income households have less exposure to the Internet, they are skeptical about the value of digital technology.

The second reason is that Internet sites have a lack of Spanish or other language content making language an issue for Hispanics and other nationalities. In a study done by Cheskin Research in Belmont, California, about 58% of Hispanic households in the study do not own computers (Lach, 2000). Of the 58% of households who don't own a computer, 40% said that they simply do not need a computer while 29% said that their unfamiliarity with computers is the reason for not having one.

In another study done by Jupiter Communications in the year 2000, only 41% of Latino households use the internet compared to 54% Caucasian households and 69% Asian American households (Lipke, 2000). Oscar Gaxiola, a native Spanish speaker who also speaks English, states that he only sees English on the Internet 85% of the time (Marriott, 1998). Although Oscar would feel more comfortable going to Spanish sites, he understands that

the English language is the dominant language of the world and that it will take awhile for other countries to catch up in terms of more websites in languages other than English.

The third reason is that there is a lack of relevant content along with limited rural access to many online technologies. The fourth and obvious reason is that technology is expensive and hard to maintain (Honore, 2000).

It is a huge challenge to address the digital divide in schools throughout the developing parts of the world. School budgets are often limited, hence not contributing much to the considerable costs of technology. Finding software and hardware at affordable costs for the computer is another challenge schools face. Guidance as to how to acquire appropriate technologies, how to work with the equipment, and how to integrate its use into the curriculum is needed for school administrators and teachers who have little experience with technology.

Schools that have spent too high a percentage of their budget on hardware alone have seen machines untouched and investments wasted. This is due to teachers not receiving effective training to work with technology in the classroom. This in the end produces utilization

levels in laboratories and classroom that are very low. "Underestimating the significance of the teacher's role in any technology plan can be a crucial error" (Tiene, 2004, p. 92).

In order to not exacerbate an already problematic financial situation, information and communications technology projects that address the digital divide must keep costs down. One strategy that can be use is to use more less expensive traditional technologies that are widely available to everyone comparable to those up to date technologies. Another strategy would be to develop multi-purpose projects that would maximize investments. Technology needs to be available to all teachers and students in all subject areas. Also if the equipment is used around the clock, it is the best way to insure the impact of information and communication technologies (Tiene, 2004). An example of this would be to open the school lab for community use during the evenings or to use the facilities to train parents, high school students or teachers that might need more reinforcement in the area.

Information and communication technology is so expensive that it is hard to provide technology for those that are economically disadvantage. Hence, we end up in a "catch 22" when we are addressing the issue of digital

divide. How do those who do not have access to technology use it to enhance their life when they simply can' t afford it? There are though, many approaches to addressing this issue. One approach would be to find organizations that would contribute. Many organizations have funding available to address digital divide projects. Another approach would be to establish partnerships with organizations that value technology and would like others to be trained in it. The third approach would be to find ways that the community could use technology in affordable ways. Organizations can provide or offer telecommunications and computer services at affordable price to the community. This would be beneficial to both. The community would be able to engage in technology where as the organizations can build clientele, which promotes business for them (Tiene, 2004).

The Internet offers a vast amount of opportunities for social mobility. The use of the Internet and knowledge of technology is becoming a more desired trait in the workplace. The growing American economy is greatly linked to the Internet. The nation is becoming increasingly dependent on the Internet for information, communication, and even disbursement of funds such as food vouchers and federal aid checks. The people who could benefit the most

from the Internet are not participating in this era of digital prosperity. They are simply being left behind whereas the rest of the nation is benefiting from the convenience and community of the Internet. The digital divide is a real concern, as people will become increasing disadvantaged if they are not connected to the Internet (Honore, 2000).

Communicating Through Web pages

Some teachers miss out on opportunities to enlist the help of parents to ensure that their students are maintaining expected outcomes in the classroom. The reason why this happens is because teachers do not communicate well with their students' parents. Parents of students who have difficulty turning in work or completing work can become allies in helping students turn in quality work on time. "Genuine, regular, real-time collaboration with parents can make a positive difference in a child's learning experience" (Johnson, 2000, p. 49). Parents should always have answers to basic questions about the class. Such questions are:

1. What are the classroom rules?
2. What are the classroom policies?
3. What supplies do students need?

4. When are assignments due?

5. When are the test dates?

Collaborations between teachers and parents to cover these questions usually take a great amount of communication, planning and time. Teacher created Web pages available on the Internet can help make communicating and planning efforts easier by having these questions already answered on their page. This information will be easily assessable anywhere for anyone who needs to know.

There are significant differences between face to face interactions and online interactions. The most essential difference is the distance in terms of space and time. Hung and Chen identified three aspects where online interactions are significantly different from face to face interactions (2001). The first aspect is the intensity of the interaction due to the abundance of people participating in the discussion. The second aspect is that there is a better representation of the community's view. With so many people able to go online, there will be a vast amount of ideas and opinions represented. The third aspect is that there is a higher accessibility to information, resources, and expertise (Hung & Chen, 2001).

The Internet serves as a connection between people and the community. It does not only present information on

web pages, but it strikes up interactions with each other. The more creative we get in connecting people through the Internet, the more opinions and expertise we will get. Today, the Internet is used to gather huge amounts of people to collaborate with each other over long distances. Email interactions can take place in real time like text based chats.

Schools today are utilizing the Internet as a source of communication between parents and teachers. Websites serve as the basis of their connections. Web pages created by teachers that are available on the Internet can help simplify communication and planning efforts.

In the fall of 1999 at Walton High School in Marietta, Georgia, administrators wanted a solution to increase communication among parents and school staff while decreasing paperwork. Parents and teachers expressed concern about not being able to communicate with each other on students' progress in class. Now, teachers and administrators are informing parents and students of changes in class assignments or school events by using a new online community (ehomeroom, 2000). Staff members at Walton High have been able to save a lot of time updating parents about constantly changing events. Schools can post academic, extracurricular and sports activity schedules

through eHomeRoom.com. There has been an enormous amount of positive feedback from parents and students since Walton High began using this site. John Flatt, principal of Walton High said, "Parents would much rather log onto the site and have an instantaneous answer than receive a busy signal or wait on hold for several minutes" (ehomeroom, 2000, p. 99).

Mitty High School located in the middle of Silicon Valley had a problem communicating with their parents about homework assignments, school events and schedules. They needed to find a program that could be easily accessed through the Internet and that addressed multiple platforms that streamline communication with parents, students and teachers (Silva, 2003). The school found a program called Docutek atSchool, which was originally designed for a university setting. Docutek atSchool provided teachers an easy way to communicate with parents through a web-based program. Parents and teachers could easily email each other about current events or problems existing in the classroom. Coaches were using Docutek to post release forms, sport schedules, and creating calendars (Silva, 2003).

The school offered an hour or half an hour long workshops to help teachers become more acquainted with the

program. These workshops were offered after school and during teachers' prep time. Those teachers who went to the training soon realized the impact and usefulness of the web page to communicate with parents. Teachers' satisfaction and motivation for this program prompted other teachers to try it out (Silva, 2003).

Schools in Juneau, Alaska are also using the Internet as a means of communicating to parents. When schools in Juneau, Alaska started publishing electronic report cards, they saw an increase in parent teacher communication. The report cards prompted parents on whether or not their child was meeting core objectives in their classes. This was done electronically so parents were able to access this information online. "Parents reported that this information communication invigorated their involvement in their children's education and targeted efforts to improve skills" (CEO Forum, 2001, p. 11).

Not only is online communication becoming effective within a community, it is expanding worldwide. Students in science classes from Canada, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Qatar, Japan, Mexico, and United States are sharing information as they study their surrounding environment (Cannon, 1993). This is expanding the communication lines between different nations. This allows students to learn

about things around the world without even having to leave their home or classroom.

In the Mankato school district, they are taking a multi-year approach to the creation of class sites. For the first year, they are only asking teachers to have a page that list contact information, class rules, and expectations, with a link to the building calendar so parents know when other resources will be available to them. The district will also encourage teachers to increase the amount of information on class web pages. Information contained on well-developed pages will be useful enough to parents that they will motivate other teachers to put more information on their web page.

The district also plans to phase in the online grade book. The district anticipates that the ease with which grades can be inputted from home or work will motivate more teachers to do online grades. They understand the security issue concerning information so readily online. Teachers will use the grade book for one semester before giving parents access to it. Parents will be asked to come to school to pick up their username and passwords in person so that confidentiality is maintained.

Mankato school district knows that without the support of the school and administrators, a project like

this will not succeed. Another vital aspect to the success of the website is training and working equipment. Training will be schedule during the school days for parents and during in-service times for teachers (Johnson, 2000). It is important that schools see parents as a valuable partner in their students' education. By having useful, informative, professional class web pages, schools can take an active role in making parents aware of the quality of their teachers and programs at school.

Teacher In-service

In order for the school website to be beneficial to teachers and parents, teachers and staff at the school must be willing participants in the daily maintenance of the website. This would be an easy task if teachers were in-serviced on technology in the classroom. The demand for teachers who can effectively use technology to create a meaningful learning environment is increasing (Reilly & Sandhotlz, 2004). The importance of technology in education is widening and not enough teacher education institutions are preparing their future educators to use technology effectively. Despite this fact, international, national, and state organizations have developed technology standards that teachers must meet (Pan &

Carroll 2002). Teachers are often able to do small tasks such as locate and use simple programs, but they do not know how to integrate technology into their classrooms to promote deep engagement and critical thinking with subject matters.

School districts and states have rushed to build technology infrastructure in the past few years by buying thousands of computers and wiring classrooms for data, voice, and video networks (Best, 2002). With the intake of new technology, new technical support is needed. Teachers who once used to help out with computer problems are no longer able to because of the complexity of the infrastructure. In order to have an effective transition to a technological system, new cultural norms need to be developed. One of the first steps is to recognize the difference in assumptions, expectations, and experiences in the old and new cultures. With the immersion of the technology into the classroom and schools, it brings on potent learning opportunities for everyone.

Although an increasing number of national leaders and educators are promoting and perceiving technology to be the key to success in the 21st century, technology has not lived up to the potential expected in schools. The fundamental reason why technology in schools has not

reached its potential is due to teachers' lack of drive to convert from traditional teaching methods to the computer based methods (Dawson & Rakes, 2003). Even a small change can be a hard process. Teachers must feel comfortable about technology to make the leap. In order for teachers to adjust in their teaching methods, they must have the support and patience of their school's administration. Although it has been proven that technology training for teachers promotes the use of technology in the classroom, school administrators often claim to lack the resource and time to provide the support teachers need to incorporate technology into the curriculum (Dawson & Rakes 2003). Due to the fact that not enough has been devoted to individual teacher's concerns, technology has not fully been integrated into the teaching and learning process.

Sadly, there has been a sluggish uptake of technology in schools even with teacher training programs having been implemented within districts. A telephone interview done on 550 public school teachers in the US surprisingly revealed that 39% of teachers said that they hardly ever used a computer in school (Murphy & Beggs 2003). Murphy and Beggs (2003) stated that primary school teachers were still using computers mainly for administrative tasks instead of using them as a tool for children to learn

from. Teachers were less likely to enjoy using computers compared to their students. Students were also more confident than teachers about their ability to use computers.

Now, more than before, teachers need to know how to use technology in the classroom. Two major components are missing from experiencing an educational telecommunication revolution. The first thing is long term training for teachers to get better acquainted with the material. The second thing is having individual computers for teachers to practice and develop their telecommunication skills at their convenience (Cannon 1993).

Several measures should be considered to help preservice teachers to catch up with the emerging technology and learn how to integrate computers into the curriculum. These include the positive attitude toward computer integration, promotion of constructivist approaches to teaching, and the creation of school-college partnerships in which the use of technology is supported (Pan & Carroll 2002). Universities and schools must form partnerships to guarantee that preservice teachers have opportunities to integrate technology into their instruction in the classroom (Pan & Carroll 2002). This collaboration between the university and schools will

ensure that the technology use taught in schools will transfer to the classroom instruction.

Cannon (1993) states that there are a couple of telecommunication objectives that should be included in a teacher education program. The first objective is to develop a broad and solid foundation in telecommunications technology content for elementary and secondary teachers within their methods class. The second objective is to provide a telecommunication program that is developed through the collaboration of content specialists, education specialists, school practitioners, and field specialists. The third objective is providing telecommunication experiences and practices in home settings (Cannon 1993).

Spitzer, a consultant for IBM discusses 20 keys to successful training and performance improvement. His first key is that skill learning requires significant practice. Teachers often go to trainings that last a regular workday. During these trainings teachers are trained on a superficial level where they do not get much practice of the new information they are given. What results from this is that once the teacher goes back to the classroom they return to their normal, comfortable way of doing things. In order to be competent in the area, teachers need to

over learn the material so that they are comfortable with it.

The second key is to not confuse knowledge with skills. Trainers continue to fail to make the differentiation between knowledge and skill. It is different to understand what is being taught then to actually be able to do it.

The third key is to make sure that employees have strong "core skills." Core skills are like survival skills. These are the skills teachers use everyday in their job. These skills should be the focus of training. It is from these skills that we build on. Core skills should come as second nature to teachers. Without a strong core skill base there is no foundation for success (Spitzer 2003).

The fourth key is that competence is only the beginning of the learning process. Administrators should encourage their teachers to strive for higher levels of competence. Not only should teachers learn new skills, they should continuously enhance and practice the skills. The fifth key is to teach teachers to learn. If teachers can learn on their own, learning is more likely to occur.

The sixth key is that learning out of context is doomed to failure. If teachers are not given a chance to

learn in the realistic scenarios, they really do not know how to apply what is taught to their instruction. Teachers are often given examples that are unrealistic. On the job training is so much more beneficial because it reduces the need for transfer.

The seventh key is that learning should be team oriented. Teachers are often used to being isolated from their colleagues. Teachers are so use to just teaching behind closed doors that the notion of working with other teachers to share idea is indeed strange and uncomfortable. As teachers start to work and learn in teams, more information and knowledge will be shared. This ultimately leads to a better understanding and competence of the subject being evaluated or taught.

The eighth key is that the purpose of training should be to enable business results. It is good to succeed as an individual teacher, but when the whole school is able to apply what is taught, the organization grows as a whole. Administrators need to think about how the training will increase the effectiveness of the school and also look at the results produced from this training.

The ninth key is that effective training is never an event. Teachers to often talk about trainings as an event or activity they must go to or do. Spitzer states that not

only is activity not a good measure of training effectiveness; it is the major generator of cost (2003). Effective training should be a process that is carried on into the classroom on a day to day basis. Training should not be an activity or event that happens one day and is forgotten the next.

The tenth key is that interpersonal and conceptual skills are as important as technical skills. In today's organizations it is essential to have communication, teamwork, decision -making and problem solving for organizational success. The biggest mistake that schools make is that they do not teach enough common methodologies and vocabulary.

The eleventh key is that training tends to reinforce the status quo. Training tends to copy other trainings rather than adaptive and generative (Spitzer 2003). Too much training these days are focus on giving the trainees the correct answer. In education there is rarely a standard way that will remain that way for a very long time. Employees must be flexible and able to take initiatives.

The twelfth key is that timing is crucial to effective training. The majority of schools train teachers with information just in case they might need to know it.

Schools train teachers at the wrong time making it not useful to the teachers. It is better to train teachers during a time that they can utilize the information and implement right away. When schools or districts train their teachers when they are off track, it doesn't help the teacher, it actually hinders the teacher. It hinders them because it becomes an information overload instead of information that they can start implementing.

The thirteenth key is that you need to focus training on the most critical priorities. It is useless to train teachers on a lot of things at the same time. Most likely, teachers will leave the training with only one or two concepts in their minds. When you spread your training thin covering everything in little detail, not much impact is made. Equally, if you were to focus only on a couple of skills that would be beneficial in the long run, and covered it in depth, teachers would retain more from the training.

The fourteenth key is that organizational learning cannot be sustained without management reinforcement. The success of the training does not depend on what happens before or during the training, but what happens after the training. Administrators need to consistently reinforce what teachers have been trained in order for the skill to

thrive. Not only do teachers need to start utilizing new skills and concepts learned, but administrators also need to utilize the skill and continue to support the teachers.

The fifteenth key is that you should not create a training bureaucracy. This means that training should be based on what teachers need instead of what makes the trainer feel better. The sixteenth key is that the design and delivery is the least important aspect of training. The most important aspect is making sure that the skills taught will be transferred into the classroom. The delivery and design of the training is pretty generic and can be copied by anyone.

The seventeenth key is that training must be systematic. Performance improvement does not result directly from learning. It has many contributory causes. Development of training partnerships within the school is critical to success. Training needs to involve the teachers as well as the administrators. Learning cannot exist when there are serious problems within the schools.

The eighteenth key is that measurement is crucial to drive the right kind of learning. There are many schools and districts that are not doing any type of evaluation of the effectiveness of the program. The nineteenth key is that effectiveness is the key to e-learning success. Most

of the time trainers read bullets off of their slideshow presentation. This does not teach teachers a single thing. It is bad practice that should stop. Teachers cannot be trained by reading slides off the Internet, but rather by involving them in skills and activities that can be used in their classroom.

The last key is that good instruction is not defined by the glitter and presentation. Good instruction comes from delivering a training that is both beneficial and supportive of the staff at the school (Spitzer 2003).

It is difficult to implement a new program or skill when the principal has very little knowledge about it. No matter how much schools train their teaches to implement technology into the classroom routine, it will not be successful if the principal is not the key facilitator in the efforts of doing so. Therefore, technology training should be geared to administrators and teachers (Dawson & Rakes 2003). The process used to train teachers should also be used to train principals because both are required to adopt new practices. Both their preparation for their roles are viewed as parallel procedures (Dawson & Rakes 2003).

South Dakota's Spearfish District used a broad approach in getting its educators to integrate technology

into instructional practices. One approach that this district used was the concept of more pay for more participation. A credit system rewarded teacher participation through advancement on the district salary schedule (Elb & Steele, 2004). With that kind of incentive, teachers grew more willing to put the time out to use technology innovatively in their classrooms. Teachers also willingly went to training to learn something rather than just going through the motions. After five years, over 85% of district teachers received a moderate to intensive amount of training in technology skill building. Also, Over 85% received moderate to intensive training in teaching with technology and over 70% had training on classroom methods (Elb & Steele, 2004).

Web Page Design

Miller (2004) a university researcher needed a way to share her work with her colleagues. She found that the only time she was able to share with her co-workers was by seeing them during lunch and at department meetings. Miller realized over the past year the tremendous value and impact of creating and maintaining her own professional website. This created a new way for her to

share her work with other educators through the World Wide Web.

Before other educators could see her work, Miller had to think of a way make her documents accessible. Miller states that the first thing that needs to be done is the purchase of a domain name. A domain name is the name contained within the URL (universal resource locator). This is where your website lives on the World Wide Web. Since people need to easily be able to remember your web address so you should think carefully about what you choose. There are also a couple of extensions that can be used. For example you have .com, .ws, .net, and .us. The most familiar ending for people is .com.

Once you have come up with a name, you can check on the availability of the name since the name you thought of could already be in use. When you have purchased your domain name, you must then decide on whom you want to be your web host provider. A web host provider is the company that will actually keep your website's files on their server and make them accessible via the World Wide Web (Miller, 2004). There are three things you should consider when choosing your server space (Weinstein, 1997). The first thing to consider is how easy it would be to upload files from your school to the server. Also, does the

server provider offer any type of software or technical support to help you in creating the website? The second thing you should consider is if there are any restrictions on access? For example, some servers only allow one person per organization to upload at a time. This could be very time consuming and frustrating for a team that may be in charge of maintaining a website. The third thing you should consider is if you will have adequate space and room to grow. A school website that is just starting off usually needs around 15 - 20 MB of space (Weinstein, 1997). As the school website expands you will need more space.

There is a lot of work that needs to be done before even beginning to design a web page. Parents, teachers, and administrators' needs should be taken into account when doing the preliminary sketches of the web page. While the focus of the school web page is to inform parents and the community of upcoming events, the web page should also open doors of communication between parents and teachers. A school website's appearance is very crucial in relaying goals and objectives. This is why it is important to look at the design process of the web page to ensure that the school is represented correctly. The website should always

carry the school's address and phone number (Vinocur, 2004).

Many web users scan the entire page when looking at a particular web page. A neatly and well organized web page will grasp the reader's attention faster. An important issue to be considered in the user-interface design is complying with the learner's cognitive process (Liu, 2001). Good web site designs begin with asking yourself why things are arrange they way that they are on the page. When you combine the content, user - interface and pedagogy you get a good solid effective web page that fulfills its main purpose (Liu, 2001).

Creating and maintaining a website is hard work. You will need to figure out how you want your website to look and what you want it to contain. Once you have decided what you want on your website you will have to collect all the files you want on there. It is best that all your documents are in one format so that there will be no confusion. It is easier to upload multiple documents from one file location at one time then to do each file individually. Miller (2004) recommends converting all the documents you post to Adobe Acrobat format before including it in your website. The reason for this is

because with PDF format Windows and Mac computers can open and view the file.

Huffman and Rickman (2004) states that there are eight components to planning a website. They are:

1. Creation of a technology mission statement.
2. Development of technology goals and objectives. You need to decide what the purpose of the web page will be.
3. Creation of technology committees. It is very important to form a committee that will guide the process of creating the web page.
4. Training of faculty in deficient technology areas. One of the most crucial aspect of a successful web page is having teachers understand how to utilize and upkeep it.
5. Rotation of inventory. After looking at what the school has, you might need to purchase new computers and software or upgrade old computers to avoid replacement cost.
6. Keep in mind future academic challenges. A website is a continuous project. The need to anticipate growing demands and challenges are required to continue to be a success and effective web page.

7. Funding issues. There are grants and community contributions that can help supply funds for the technology budget.
8. Policy development. What is the policy of the technology plan?

There are lots of different planning models available to help in creating a web page. One typical plan that Huffman and Rickman (2004) describe is the SIMPLE model. This model can be used to come up with planning forms that will help drive the direction of the web page design.

Form should always follow function is a good thing to remember when designing your web site. You need to first clarify your goal and then design it (Weinstein, 1997). Recent studies have shown that the four factors contributing to repeat visits of websites are: high quality content, ease of use, speed and frequency of updating (Rosen & Purinton, 2004). You need to figure out what purpose this site should serve. You have to decide if you want graphics that are impressive but take a longer time to upload or would you rather have graphics that are simple, but upload quickly. Having a background that is so busy that it distracts from the content or information on the page is ineffective. A logo of your school mascot is a

good thing to have on the homepage, but you should avoid big graphics that take up an entire page.

Be consistent in providing navigational tools. Certain options such as returning to the homepage should go on every page in a predictable place so that users don't get lost in the website. Repeated basic formats speed up the time it takes to upload a page. This also presents a type of smooth flow between the pages. The flow of a web page also depends on the content of the page. Each section of the page should have its own look, color scheme, and relevant graphics. This is better done when you design by section and not by page (Reese, 2000).

A web page wouldn't really be a web page without exciting graphics. JPEG and GIF are the two file formats for still image that the World Wide Web supports. GIF is a common format used for illustrations and JPEG is format used for compressing photographic images for online display (Weinstein, 1997). Once you get graphics on the page you will be tempted to add multimedia elements such as sound and animation. One of the fastest options is GIF animation.

Web design should not result in information overload. The goal is to give users access to information in the quickest way possible. Therefore the goal of the design

should be access not abundance of information. Simplicity of design should be a major consideration as it not only makes the site more appealing, it also makes it a lot faster to load (Rosen & Purinton, 2004). Another important thing is to make the website more distinctive. A website with a distinct identity will appeal to web users more and also make them remember the site easier. Well designed websites provide at least initial answers to frequently asked questions. This ensures that parents will return to the site knowing that they will find their answers (Teague, 2004). It is also important to reduce the amount of clicks a person needs to do on the website to access needed information.

Johnson (2000), a parent who acknowledges websites as a good tool for communication with teachers states that a well designed web page can serve a variety of purpose. These purposes include:

1. Providing a general description of the classroom or course.
2. Providing a general outline and timeline of the contents covered.
3. Providing specific information about contents covered.

4. Providing real time information about the progress of individual students.

Parents can check to see if there are any areas that their child needs special help (Johnson, 2000).

Creating a website for a school is a very difficult task, but it is not as hard as maintaining a website. Once a website is created, the technology team usually thinks this is all they need to do. Their excitement for the project usually wears out and the website quickly becomes stale and stagnant (Vinocur, 2004).

With technology constantly improving and connection speeds getting faster and faster, old websites are looking outdated. Elges (2002) suggests a couple of things that you can do to freshen up a website. If your website has lots of information that is very wordy, you need to change it. The current standard is for a website to have a clean, understandable, and consistent look and feel. Websites should also be updated frequently. When a parent visits the web page a second time and see that the information has not been changed, the parent will most likely not return to the web page. Parents will feel as though the website is not a reliable source of information.

The technology team should continuously evaluate the purpose and objective of the website. Knowing the target

audiences' needs and preference can keep a website fresh and interesting. Although it is important to keep the navigation between pages simple, you also need a hook to entice or keep visitors coming back for more. This can be done by incorporating new technology such as Macromedia Flash motion graphics. By doing this, you keep the website from becoming flat and trite.

Summary

The issue of digital divide will continue to be an underlying factor in the success of technology in schools and the community. Although there are many factors contributing to this issue, more and more households are purchasing computers and going online. A report from Jupiter Communications states that although low-income Latino and African American families will continue to lag in the Internet penetration rate, these groups have nevertheless already reached the critical mass inflection point from which rapid business growth can develop and grow (Lipke, 2000). Schools and community are now leaning more towards online communication. Technology savvy schools are already making the leap into Internet communication with parents. Schools now have websites that parents can easily access to gain information about

current school events and student progress. These school websites are also being used as a communication tool between parents and teachers.

With the growing demand for up to date information, teachers and school administrators must be trained in appropriate areas to continue to deliver and incorporate technology in the classroom. By finding ways to lessen the digital divide, train teachers how to incorporate technology in the classroom and providing a school website that is well designed and clear, schools are taking steps toward bridging the communication gap between parents and schools.

CHAPTER THREE

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this project is to produce a school website that promotes and enhances communication between the school and parents. By creating a website for Preston Elementary, we are taking a step towards bridging the gap between the school and the community.

To accomplish this goal, Preston Elementary had to gain input from their parents within the community. A survey was invented to find out what was needed and what parents saw as important to them. Once the analysis was completed on the information provided, the web designer was able to start planning the website.

The main objective of the web designer was to produce a website that incorporated what the parents wanted to see on the website and answers to frequently asked questions in the office. After reviewing all the information obtained from the surveys and teachers input, the web designer concluded that the objective of the website would be to:

1. Make the website simple and easy to navigate through.

2. Have a page devoted to frequently asked questions from parents (example: Track days off).
3. Keep parents informed about upcoming events by updating the calendar on a bi-weekly basis.
4. Post state standards for all grade levels.
5. Eventually have all teachers participate in online grade book.
6. Post the Panther Newsletter each month.

Although there were more things parents wanted to see, these six points were the highest in demand. Preston would like to eventually incorporate everything over a period of time.

Another objective for the school was to offer training and support to parents and teachers on how to navigate through the website. Teachers would also get trained also on how to upload grades on their online grade book.

Purpose of the Project

Preston Elementary has made attempts within the last two years to improve communication between the parents, school, and community. Preston has created a Panther Newsletter that goes out to the parents every trimester.

On the Panther newsletter, parents are informed of upcoming events and schedules. Not only has Preston Elementary circulated newsletter, they also send out calendars so families are up to date with regard to fundraisers, school meetings, parent forums, and teacher conferences. Despite all these efforts, Preston is still experience a lack of community and parent involvement in the students' education.

Two years ago, Preston switched from paper inter-office communication to online communication. Every teacher has an email account and all newsletters or important information is sent to everyone via Outlook. It has reduced the cost of paper needed to distribute information among the school staff. Teachers also input lunch counts and attendance on the computer. This new technology plan has made a more effective and efficient communication between teachers, administrators, and support staff. Teachers have benefited a lot from this process.

With such a success in communication within the school, Preston wanted to expand the technological success with the community. The next step to bridging the communication gap between parents, community and school was to create a website that would incorporate everyone's

needs. The designer first needed to understand what the parents wanted to see on the website. A survey was invented to gain insights into what parents really needed. From the survey, the web designer came up with the following pages that would be on the website. They are faculty page, parent/student resource, teacher resource, school schedule, upcoming events, teacher's web page, state standards and other helpful information for parents.

Teachers' web pages will offer email addresses so that parents and teachers can communicate with each other without having to play phone tag. Teachers will no longer have to send home notices to parents risking the chance of it getting lost or thrown away. By communicating through email, teachers and parents will be able to communicate directly to each other without having to use the child as a messenger.

Teachers' web pages will be a beneficial aspect of learning. Students and parents will be able to look on the web page to see the assignments that are due for tomorrow and for the upcoming days. Parents will also be able to see what is expected of their child through posted classroom rules and behavior charts. Parents can also look at their child's grades in the class by accessing the online grade book. This will eliminate any excuses

students may have about not turning in their homework. Parents will no longer be able to say they didn't know that their son or daughter was doing so badly. By accessing this vital information about their child's progress and behavior in class, parents will be well informed of their child's progress in school.

Audience

The general characteristics of the audience for this project would consist of all ages ranging from six to sixty years old. They are both male and female who are primarily parents, students, and teachers. Since this website is geared to all ages and to teachers too, the work experience and education level will differ dramatically. Of course teachers' work experience will be more than some parents and students and teachers' education level is beyond those they teach. The area in which Preston Elementary is located is highly populated with Hispanics and African Americans (CBEDS Report, 2004). The viewers would be mainly consisting of the Hispanic and African American population.

The specific entry competencies are prerequisite skills and attitudes that learners must have to benefit from any training offered to teachers and parents. This

training is provided for teachers and parents to become better acquainted with the website and on how to navigate through pages on the website. There will be two different entry competencies since we are dealing with teachers and parents. According to a survey taken of all the teachers at Preston Elementary, all the teachers at this school know how to start a computer and do word processing. They may not know how to do anything else, but they are familiar with how a computer works. The entry competencies for them would be higher than those for parents or students. Some parents and students have never worked on a computer and probably require prerequisite competencies to get acquainted with the computer. All parents and students need to know how to start a computer and how to click onto the Internet. All teachers need to know how to access the school's web page and understand how to navigate between pages.

The attitude of the audience needs to be optimistic and excited to gain information. The audience needs to look at the website as a means to an end. They need to embrace the idea of this website and understand that they can learn and utilize this web page in a lot of different ways that would be beneficial to them.

The learning styles will vary according to the audience. Although this is an informational website, it can also serve as a resource to parents and students. There will be links to resources that might make it easier for students who learn better from a visual approach to studying and those that learn from physical activities and the manipulation of objects. Some resources on the Internet will allow students to interact with it and make noises and animations to encourage students' progress. These websites will be beneficial to certain learning styles. Also, an informational PowerPoint presentation on the website concerning procedures to do things might make teachers understand it a little better than just having it said to them or written down.

Development of the Project

The first step to developing the project was to find information on what parents and teachers wanted on the web page. In order to obtain this information parents at Preston Elementary were given a survey to fill out and return the next day. 300 surveys were handed out all together. A copy of the survey is in Appendix A. Each child in grades one through five received a survey to give to his or her parent. 192 surveys were completed and sent

back to school that week. Out of 192 surveys 69% stated that they have a computer at home and 63% of the parents surveyed said they had Internet access. When asked if they had Internet access at work, only 53% were able to access the net at work. When checked to see overall how many parents had access to the Internet either at work or at home, 73% of those surveyed said yes. Figure 1 shows the amount of people who had computers at home, the amount who had access to the Internet from the house and the amount who has access to the Internet either from work or home.

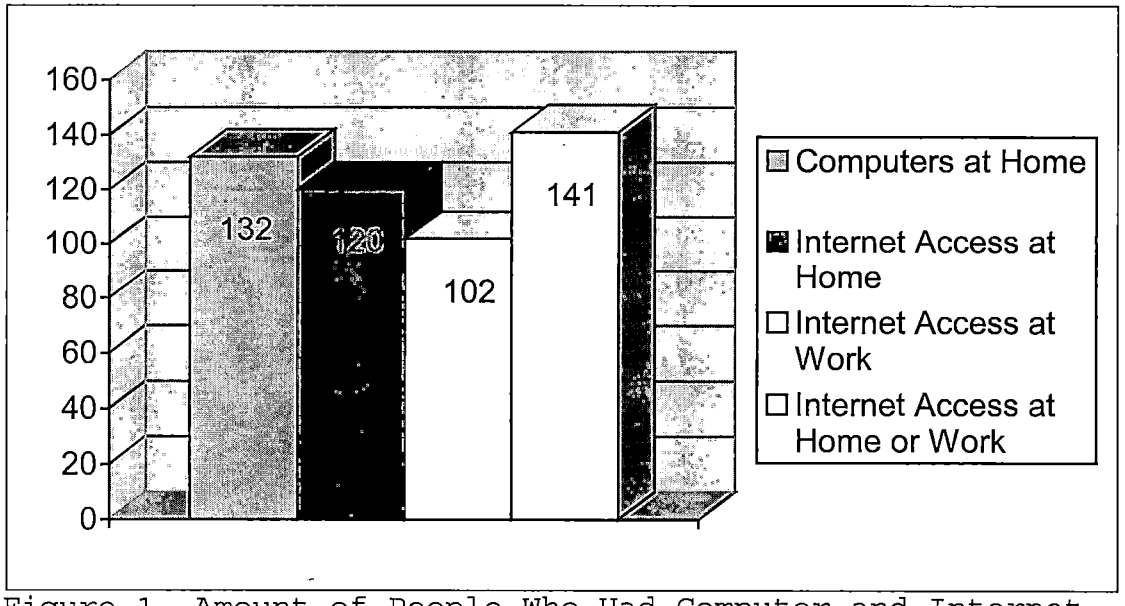


Figure 1. Amount of People Who Had Computer and Internet Access

When parents were asked it they had a hard time going to parent conference due to time constraints, 41% of parents said yes. With the website, conferences can be

done online through email or chat rooms. This will be something that can be looked at in the future.

Another question that was on the survey was about communication through a web page. The question asked parents if their child's teacher had a web page posting the grades and assignments, do they thing they would use it. An overwhelming amount of parents agreed that it would be beneficial to them. 55% of parents strongly agreed and 40% of parents agreed that it would be beneficial to them. Only 9% of parents stated that they disagreed or neither agreed or disagreed. Figure 2 below illustrates these numbers.

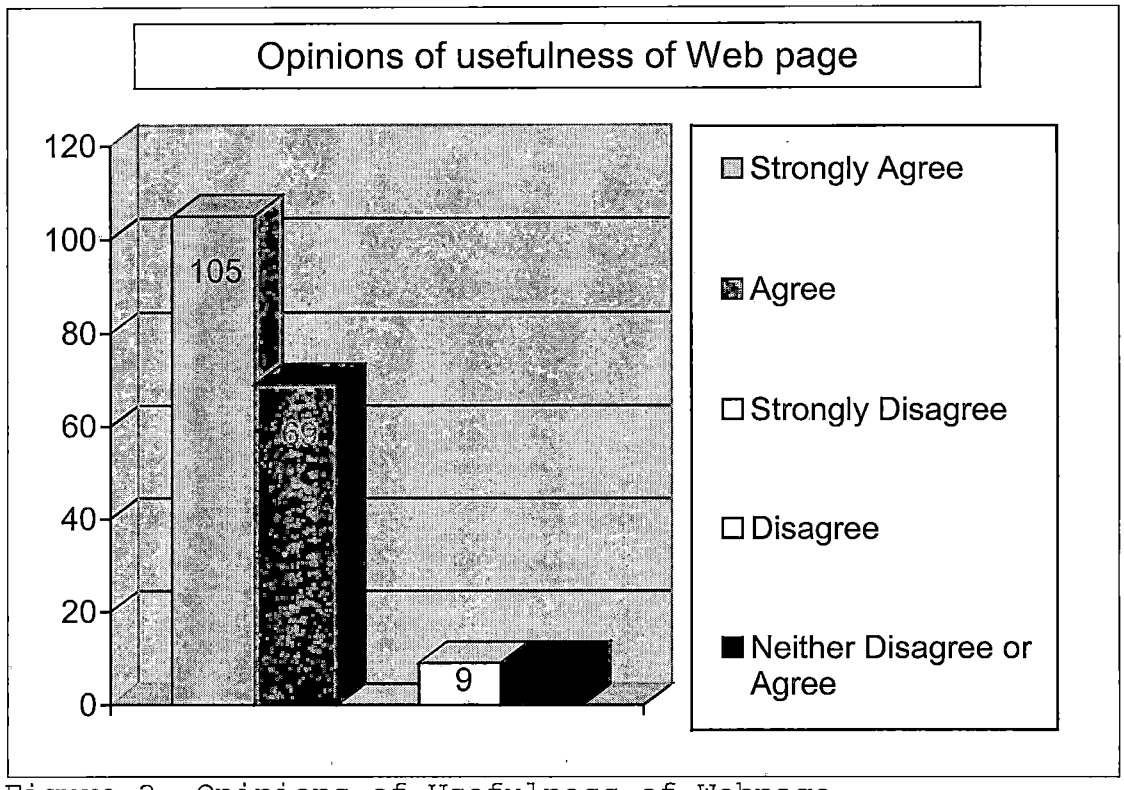


Figure 2. Opinions of Usefulness of Webpage

According to the results, it seems as though parents would benefit from a teacher web page.

The last question dealt with what parents wanted to see on the website. This was a very hard section to analyze and get information from. Lots of parents were confused with the numbering system. They were supposed to number the choices from one through eleven. Number one meant it was the most important to them and eleven being the least important to them. Lots of parents ended up putting check marks on the choices they liked and left the other choices blank. In order to analyze this, the choices

were put in order from those being picked the most to those being picked the least. The majority of parents chose their child's scores, their child's assignments and the grade level standards as being the top three choices. The two choices that ended up being picked the least were the PTA information/fundraiser and School Site Council/ELLAC. The rest of the choices were almost the same in terms of what they wanted. The school calendar, school lunch menu, library information, Preston Panther newsletter and upcoming events all were ranked the same in priority. There were no big differences in the outcome of these choices.

Design of the Project

The website is designed on nice gentle outline of green leaves. The background is white in color making the page seem relax in nature. The words "Preston Panthers" is on the two sides of the mascot. It is done in blue to symbolize the school color. On the left hand side is the navigational tool bar. This tool bar is always on the left hand side of every page (see Figure 3). This is so users won't have a hard time navigating through the pages. As Weinstein (1997) states, it is important to provide navigational tool bars in a consistent manner so that the users can find it easily.

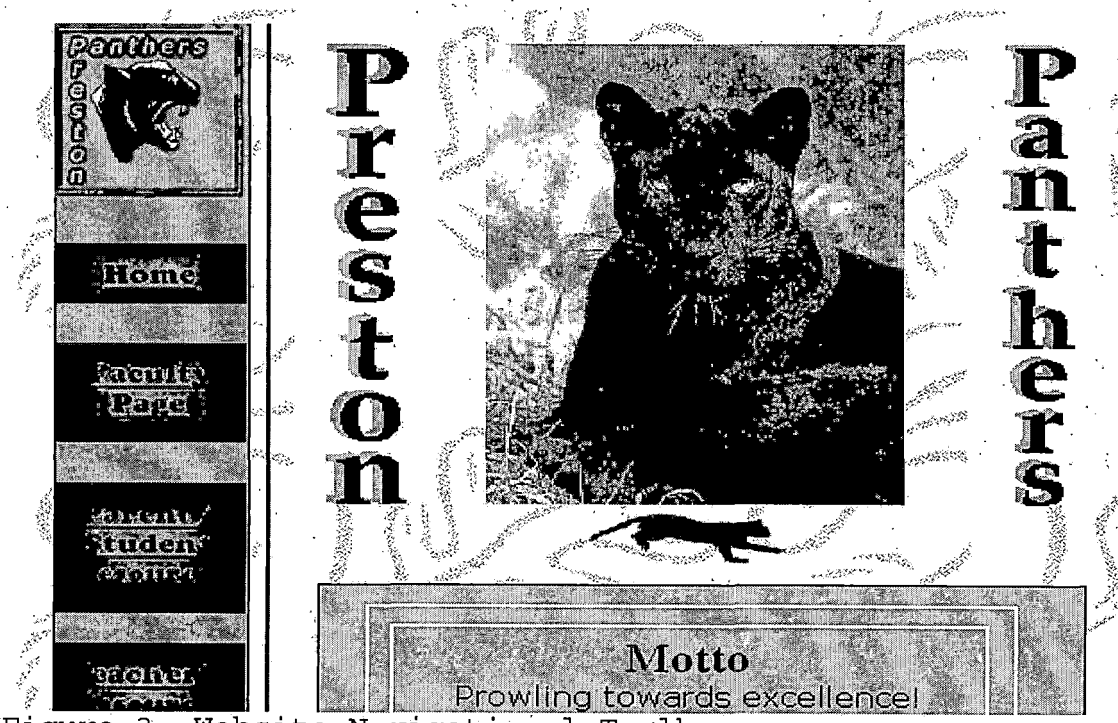


Figure 3. Website Navigational Toolbar

The school motto and mission statement is located in the middle of the web page. This is important to have on the home page so parents and the community can understand what the school stands for. On the bottom of every page in this website is a box with contact information (see figure 4). It is always important to inform users where they can contact the school or the web designer for questions or comments.

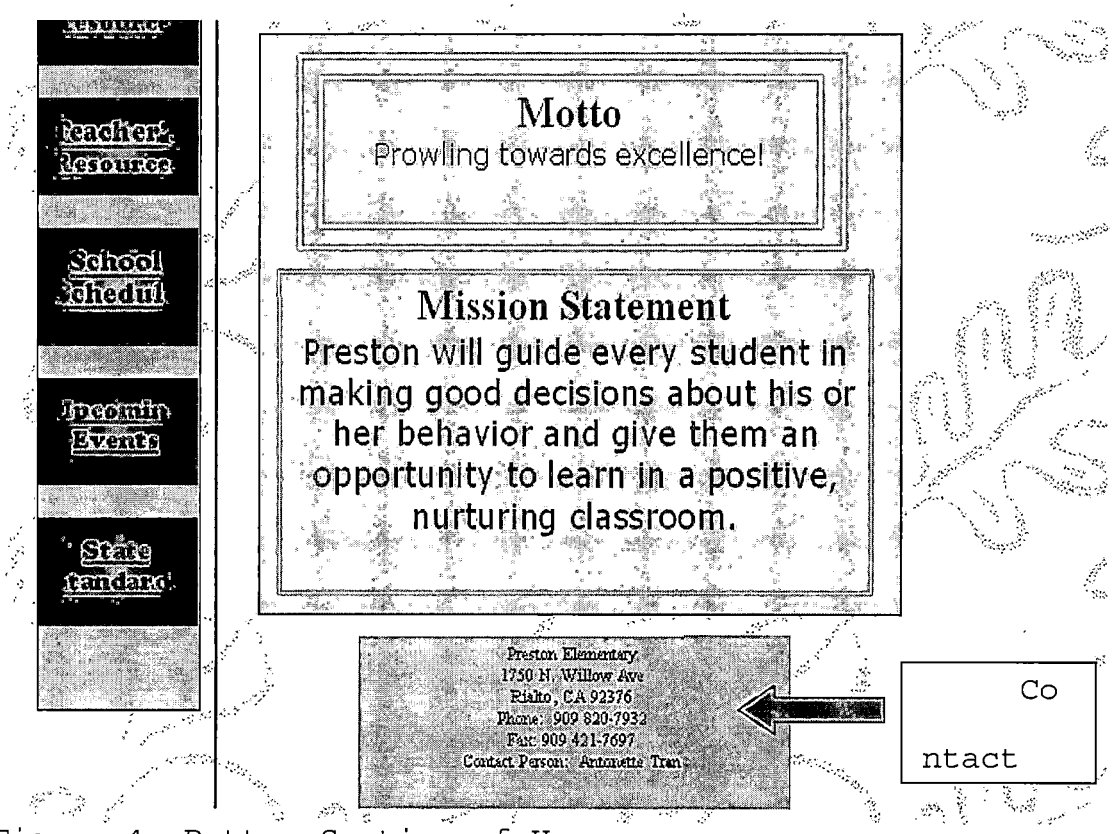


Figure 4. Bottom Section of Homepage

The contact person is also on there so users no who to ask for. In order for the website to be successful, office

staff also need to know the website and refer to it when applicable. Telling parents that they can find the information on the website when they call in about a question can promote the website too.

The structure of the website is outlined below. The flow chart in Figure 5 gives a better picture of how things are connected.

Content Structure

The following will be links on the school homepage.

1) Faculty Page
   a) All teachers will be listed according to what track they are on and what grade they teach.
   b) All teachers will have hyperlinks to their own website.
      i) Teachers will have a message to parents introducing themselves and the class they are currently teaching.
      ii) Teachers will provide email address or ways to contact them.
      iii) Teachers will have hyperlinks to different areas that parents might need.
   c) Grade Book - Teachers can post grades online so that parents can access it easily to keep track of how their child is doing.

d) Homework - Teachers will need to put weekly or nightly homework here so parents will know what their child needs to do in case the child forgets.

e) Class Schedule - This is important to parents in case they want to set up doctor's appointment and don't want their child to miss out on a certain subject. This is also good so that parents can come observe during the time they think their child has the most difficult time.

f) Students' Work - If teacher wants, she can post excellent writing samples or other subject here to acknowledge the students for doing an excellent job.

g) State Standards - A list of the standards should be posted so parents know what to is expected of their child to pass that grade level.

h) Administrators will have hyperlinks to their page with their message to the parents and public.

2) Teachers' Resource Page

a) Important Dates for the school year

b) Paperwork needed for Family Support Meetings

c) Paperwork needed for Poor work notices and retention

d) Attendance Notices

3) Parent and Student Resources

4) School Calendar

a) Important upcoming events at school

b) Important testing dates

c) Track change days

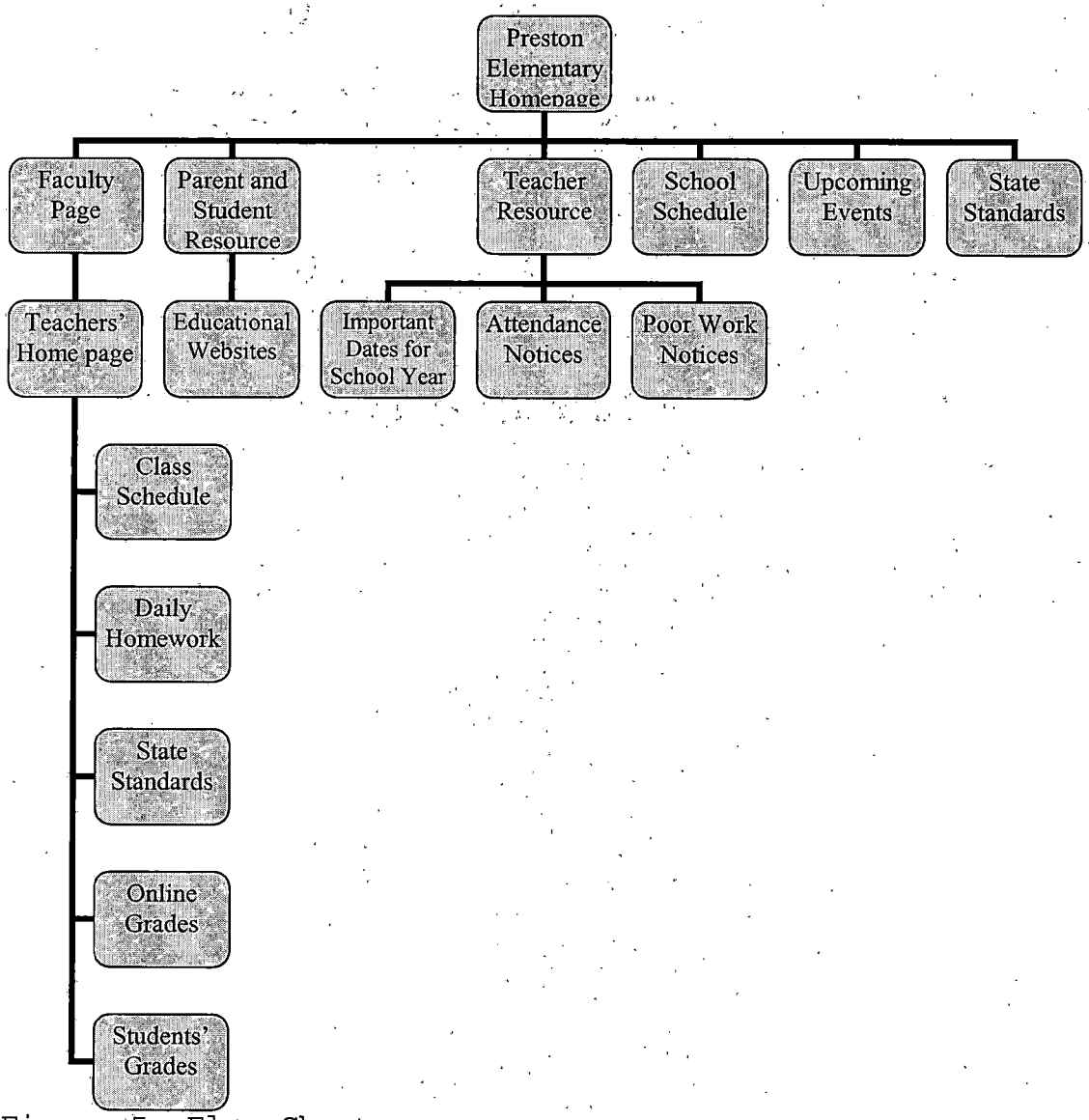


Figure 5. Flow Chart

Formative Evaluation

After the website was designed, a couple of parents were asked to test out the website to see if they were able to navigate through the pages with ease. All the parents were able to navigate easily through the web pages with ease. No one had trouble getting from one page to another. A couple of parents stated that they liked the way the navigational toolbar was on every page. That made it easy for them to go back to the page they wanted. When they reached the teacher's page, two parents stated that they didn't like the fact that after clicking on a link on that page, it was hard to get back to the previous page. The parents were informed that all they had to do was click the back button on the toolbar. After that, the parents did not find it difficult to navigate. The links attached to the teacher's page did not have a link to return to the teacher's homepage. It only had a link to get them back to the faculty page. This was an added waste of time.

All the parents who tested out the website found it very useful to them. They enjoyed looking things up and found that the answer was at their fingertips. The area that the parents liked the most was the teacher's homepage. They liked how all the grades, homework, class

schedule, and state standards were there for them to see. As of right now, there are only three teachers doing online grades. Hopefully with the success of these teachers, more teachers will join in. The parents whose teacher did not have online grade expressed a little disappointment but was still interested in what the website had to offer.

Parents also thought the resource page were very useful to them and their child. They liked how it provided them with extra support and practice. Some websites were directly linked to the chapter that the students were working on. This was a delight for parents. They now had a resource to help their child out.

Overall, the project was a success. Hopefully with time, the website will expand in content and resource. This website will serve as a great tool for communication between teachers and parents. As more parents become involved in the website, there will be more to gain.

CHAPTER FOUR

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE PROJECT

There were several strengths about this project. The biggest strength would be the fact that Preston Elementary now has another media of communication. Parents are so crucial in the success of the students at school. With their help, students will perform better academically. By giving them a website that answers their questions and provides them with support and resource, parents are more likely to be able to instill the importance of education with their child. Another strength is that parents now have the resource they need to give their child more help and support at home. Also, parents are informed about the grades and progress of their child. They understand where their child is in the classroom and of upcoming assignments. Parents also can now be well informed of school activities.

Apart from having strengths, there were also some limitations to this project. The biggest limitation would be that some parents simple do not have access to the Internet at home or at work. According to the survey done, this would be 27% of the parents with no Internet at work or home. With these parents, it was hard to get them

involved. The result was that the school library was opened for parents to come in and visit the website with the computers there. Parents could come in and go to the website at school. This though, is still a problem since the idea was that they didn't have to go to school.

Another limitation is that 73% of Preston Elementary's students are Hispanic or Latino (CBEDS, 2004). With this in mind, some parents could not read the website because they cannot read in English. This is a hard thing to correct. The time that it would take to develop this website in Spanish is incredible. Because no one has been selected to do this, there will be no translation done in the near future. Although there are websites that offer the tool to translate web pages into different languages, it is not accurate and often has mistakes. These websites also do not translate words that are produced in anything other than text format. For example, if there were a heading on a web page done in an art format, it would not be translated.

Updates and maintenance of this website is another limitation of its success. It will be a hard thing to keep this website up to date and current in all activities. Some teachers' lack of willingness or resistance to the change in technology will hinder the progress of this

project. In service training is also something that needs to happen, but am not quite sure where the funds will come from to fund such trainings.

Recommendations for Future Research

Preston Elementary's main goal for this project was to get something on the Internet so that they would be able to reach more parents. What started off as a small way of communicating has turned into a great tool that parents and teachers have grown to like. Preston Elementary plans to expand their website so that all teachers take an active role in maintaining their homepage. Hopefully by next year, all teachers will have online grades.

Access to the Internet still remains a problem for some parents. Although we have given parents suggestions on where they would be able to access the internet such as the school library and the public library, we still need to do more research on ways the school can fund a lab at night for parents to come to.

More research also needs to be done on how effective the web page is in promoting communication with parents. At the start of this research, it was hard to find research articles that directly linked the success of

parent involvement in school due to a school website. Also, more research needs to be done on how effective is a website for second language learners in their language (example Spanish). Would parents use the site if they could understand it or would there still be a language barrier?

APPENDIX A

PARENT SURVEY

Dear Parents and Guardian,

My name is Antonette Tran and I am a second grade teacher at Preston Elementary. I am working on my Masters in Instructional Technology. I plan to make a school website to help improve communications between parents and teachers. On the website I plan to put the Preston newsletter, the track calendars, teachers' websites, and any other things that might be beneficial to you. In order to know what would be beneficial to you as parents, I need to find out a couple of things. Please fill out the survey below and return to your child's teacher as soon as possible. You do not need to put your name on the survey since I am only looking for an overall idea of what is needed.

Thank you,
Ms. Antonette Tran

Parent Survey on Technology

1.	Do you have a computer at home?	Yes	No
2.	If yes, can you connect to the internet at home?	Yes	No
3.	Do you or anyone in the household have Internet connection at work?	Yes	No
4.	Do you have a hard time showing up for parent conference due to time constraint?	Yes	No
5.	Are you aware of what is expected of your child in school?	Yes	No
6.	Do you find it hard to get a hold of your child's teacher to talk to them.	Yes	No
7.	Do you know your child's progress in school? (Example: test scores, assignments)	Yes	No

8. If your child's teacher had a webpage posting the grades and assignments, do you think you would use it?

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Disagree or Agree

9. How do you find out about upcoming events at school?

- ☐ Preston Panther Newsletter
- ☐ School Calendar
- ☐ Teacher's Letters
- ☐ School Marquee
- ☐ School Banners
- ☐ PTA/School Site Council Meetings

10. Do you think a website would be more helpful to you in finding out about upcoming events?

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither Disagree or Agree

11. On a scale of 1-11, 1 being the most important and 11 being the least important, rank in order what you would like to see on the school web site.

- ___ Grade Level Standards
- ___ Panther Newsletter
- ___ School Calendar
- ___ Upcoming Events
- ___ School Lunch Menu
- ___ Your child's Assignments
- ___ Your child's scores
- ___ Your child's scores on State Test
- ___ PTA information/fundraiser
- ___ School site Council /ELLAC information
- ___ Library Information

APPENDIX B

RESULTS OF PARENT SURVEY

Question #8

If your child's teacher had a webpage posting the grades and assignments, do you think you would use it?

Response	Amount
Strongly Agree	105
Agree	69
Disagree	9
Strongly Disagree	0
Neither Disagree or Agree	9

Question #9

How do you find out about upcoming events at school?

This is listed in the order of usage.

1. Teacher 's Letter
2. School Calendar
3. Preston Panther Newsletter
4. School Banner
5. School Marquee
6. PTA / School Site Council Meeting

Question #10

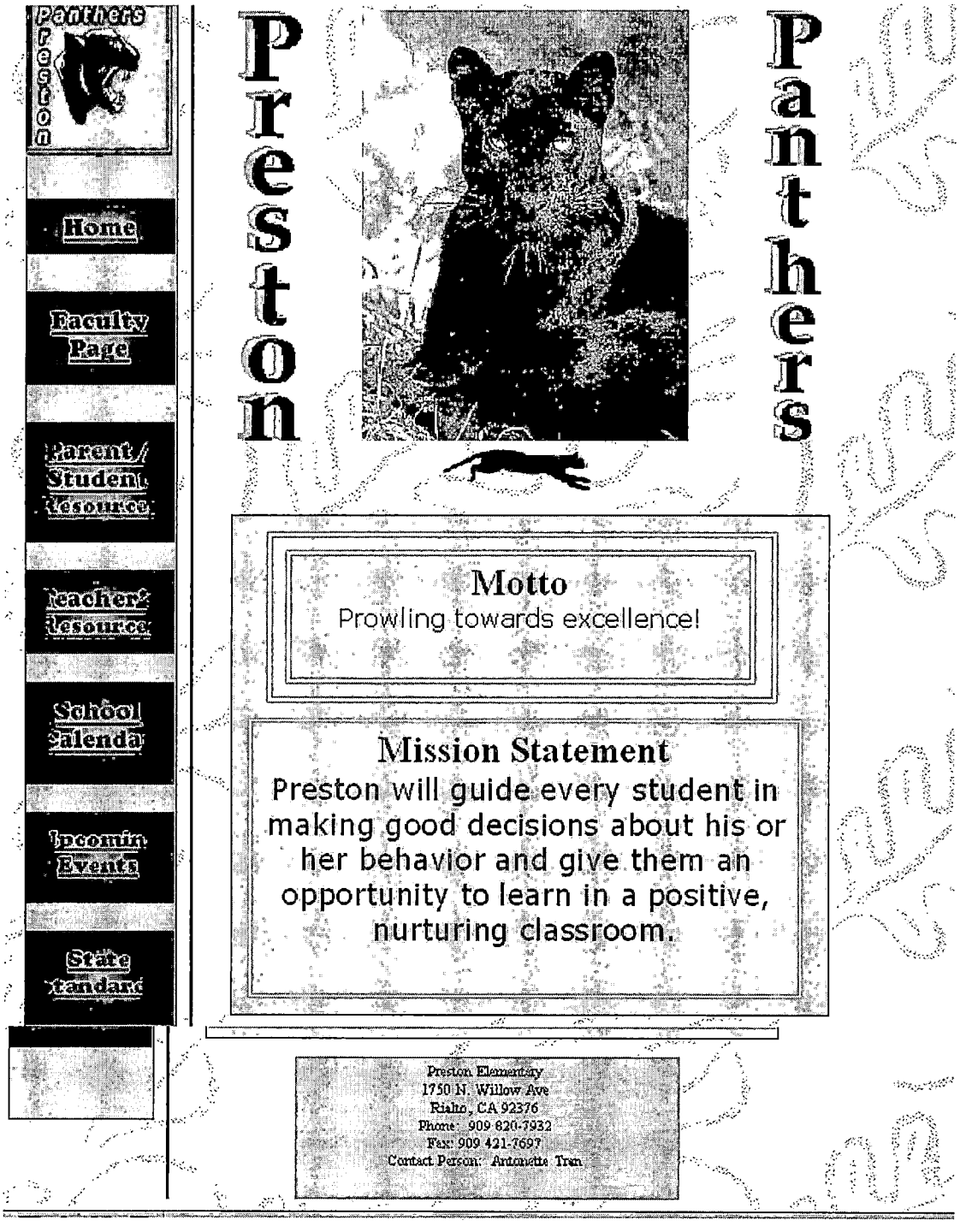
Do you think a website would be more helpful to you in finding out about upcoming events?

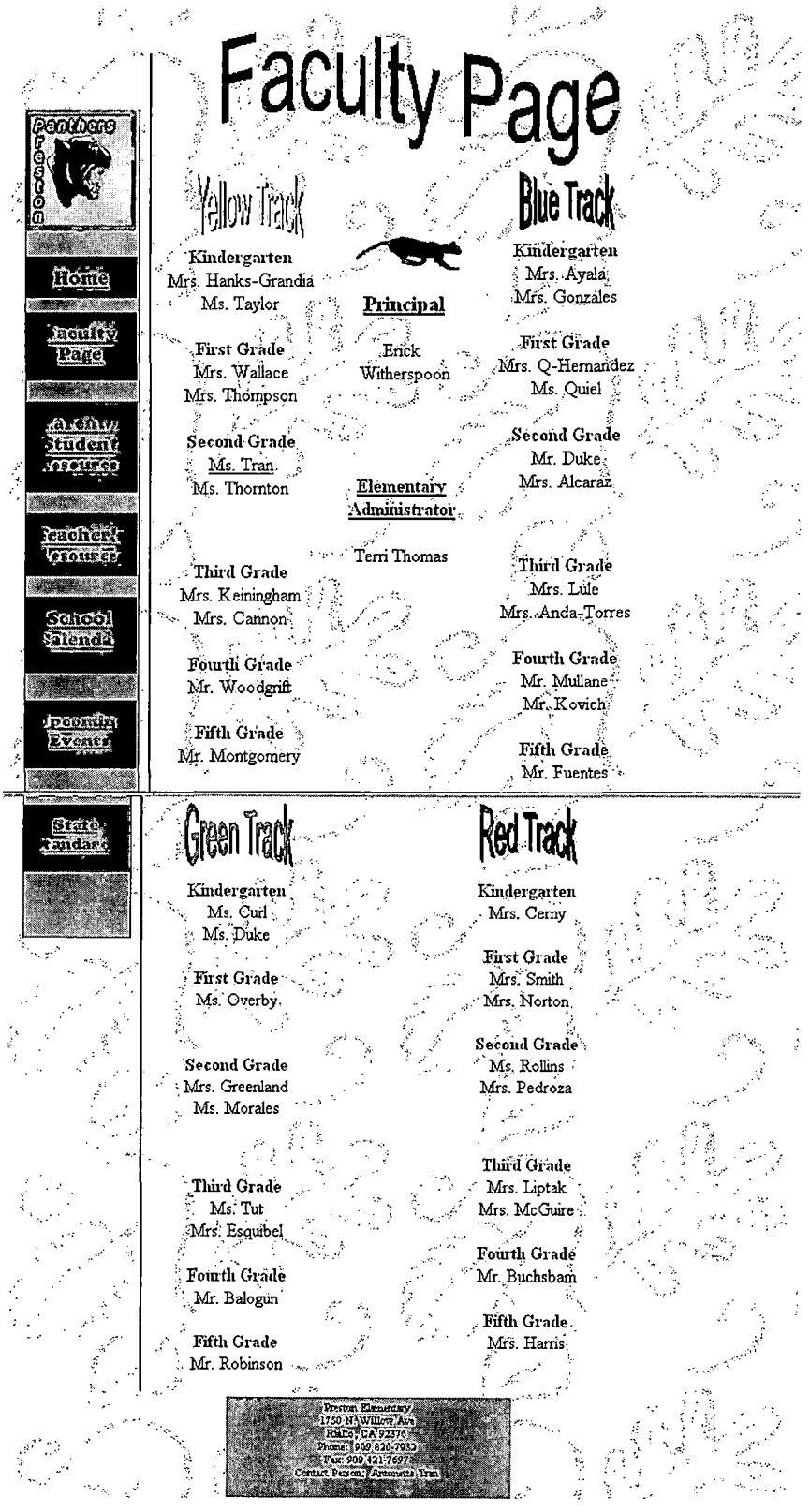
Response	Amount
Strongly Agree	87
Agree	60
Disagree	18
Strongly Disagree	3
Neither Disagree or Agree	18

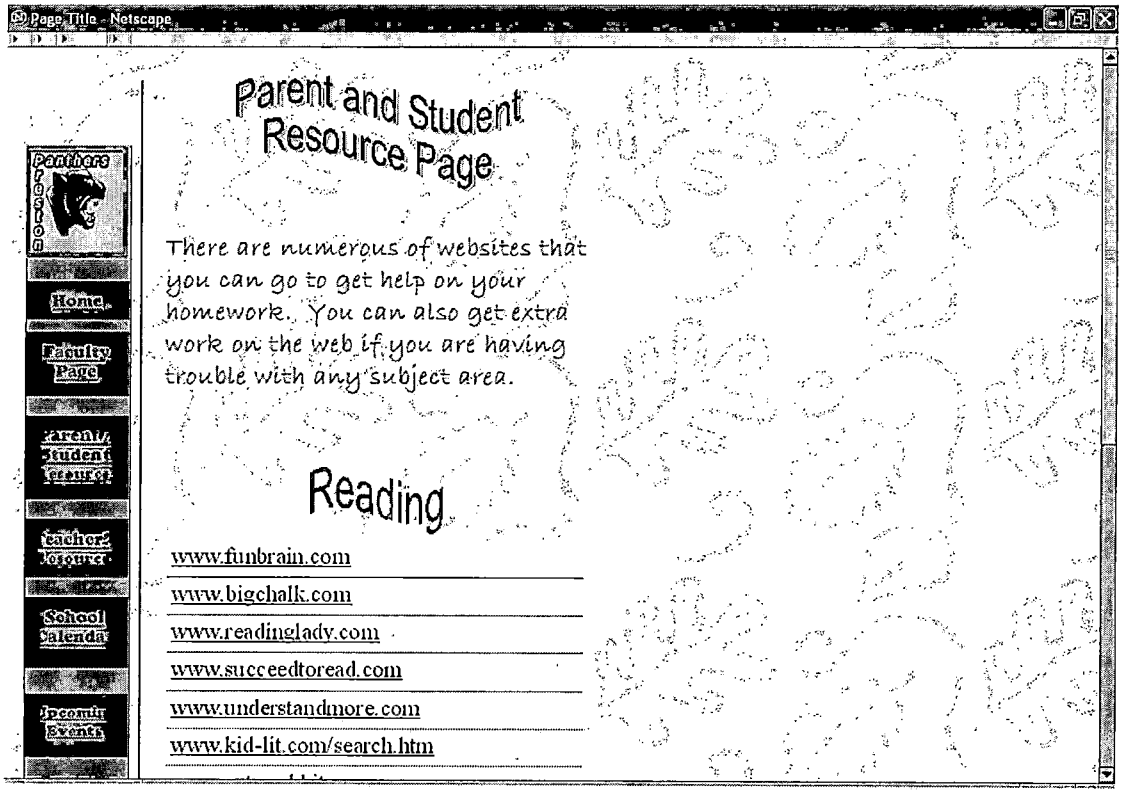
APPENDIX C

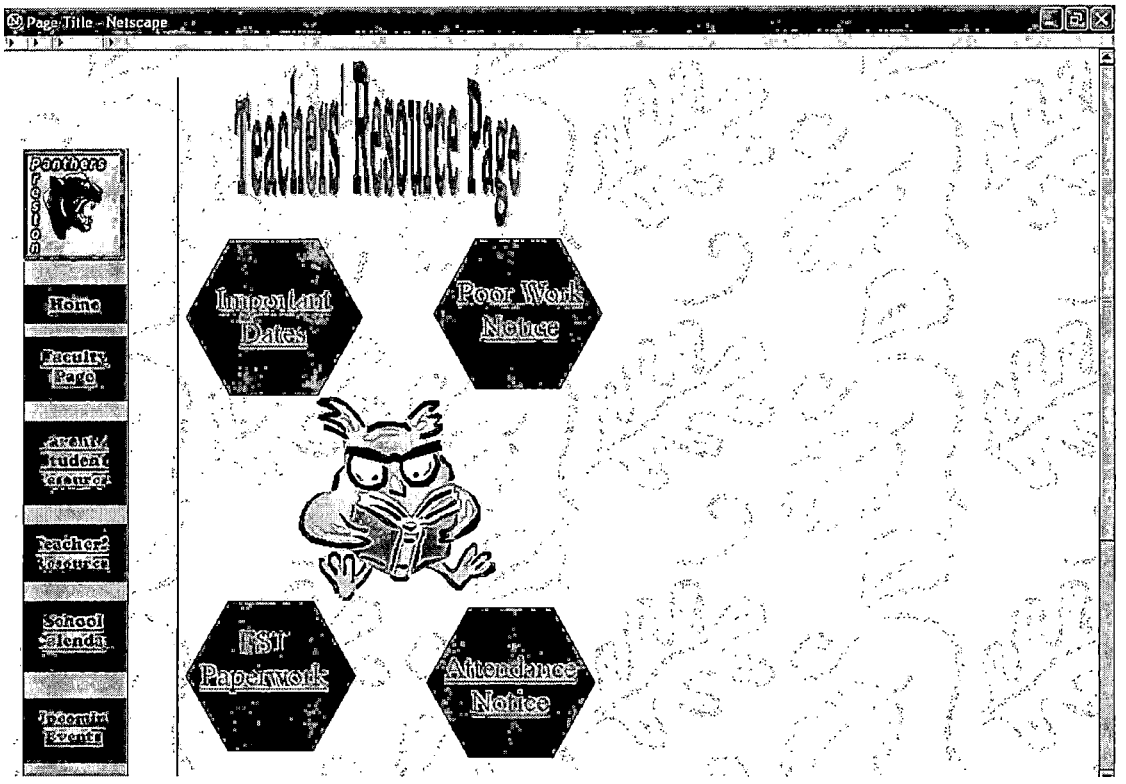
SAMPLE PAGES

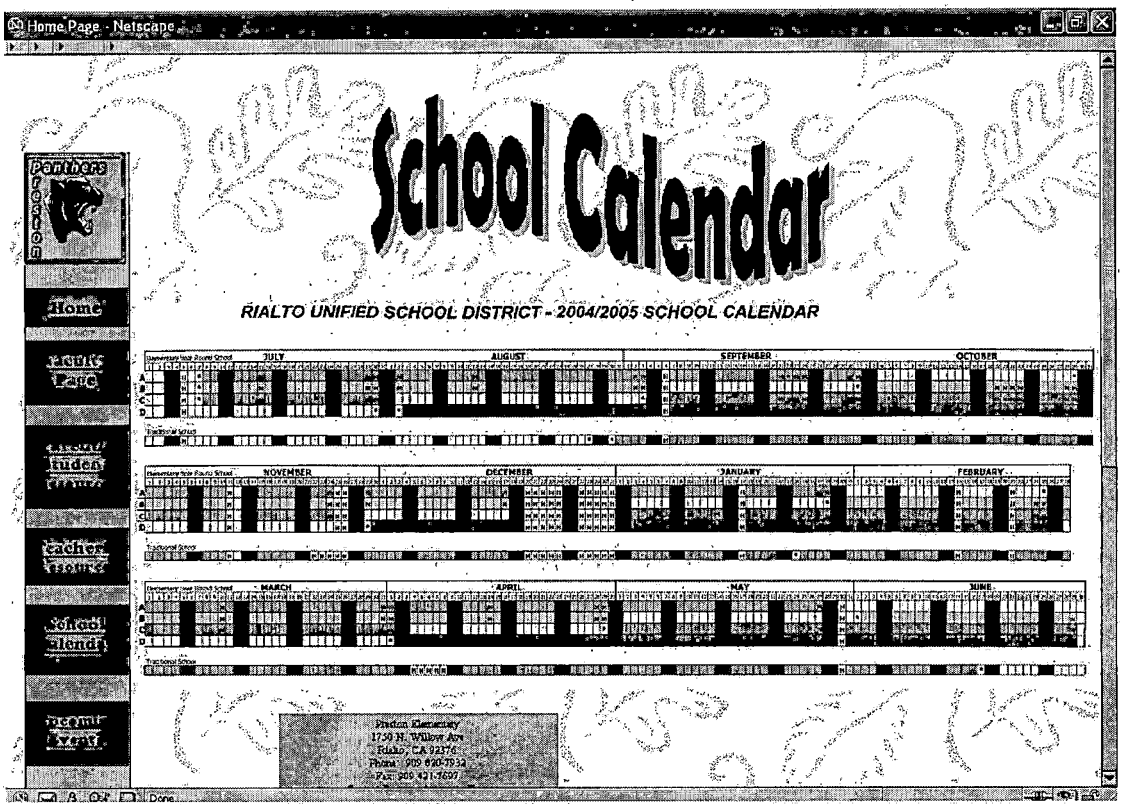
Sample pages of Preston Elementary Web Site

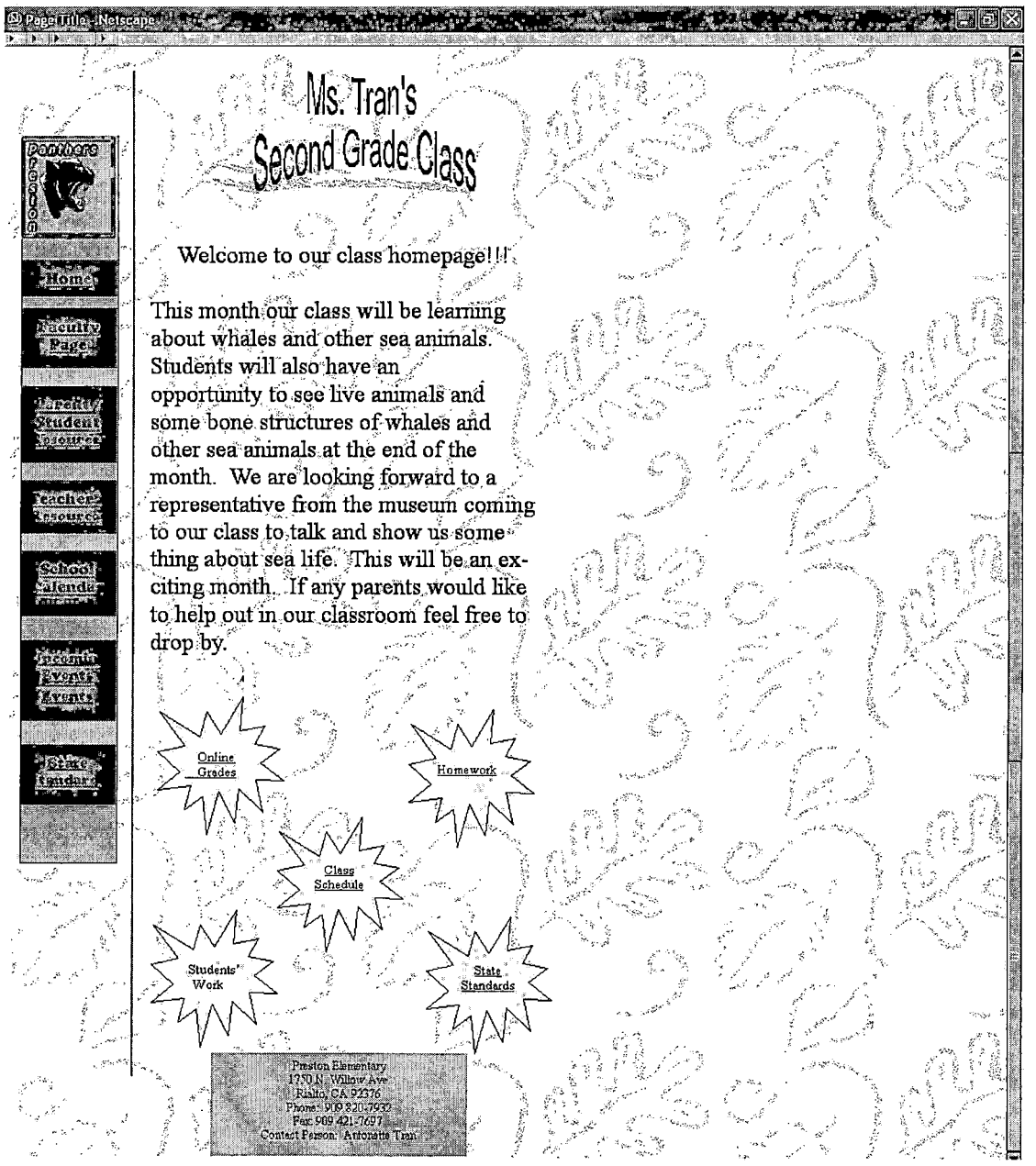


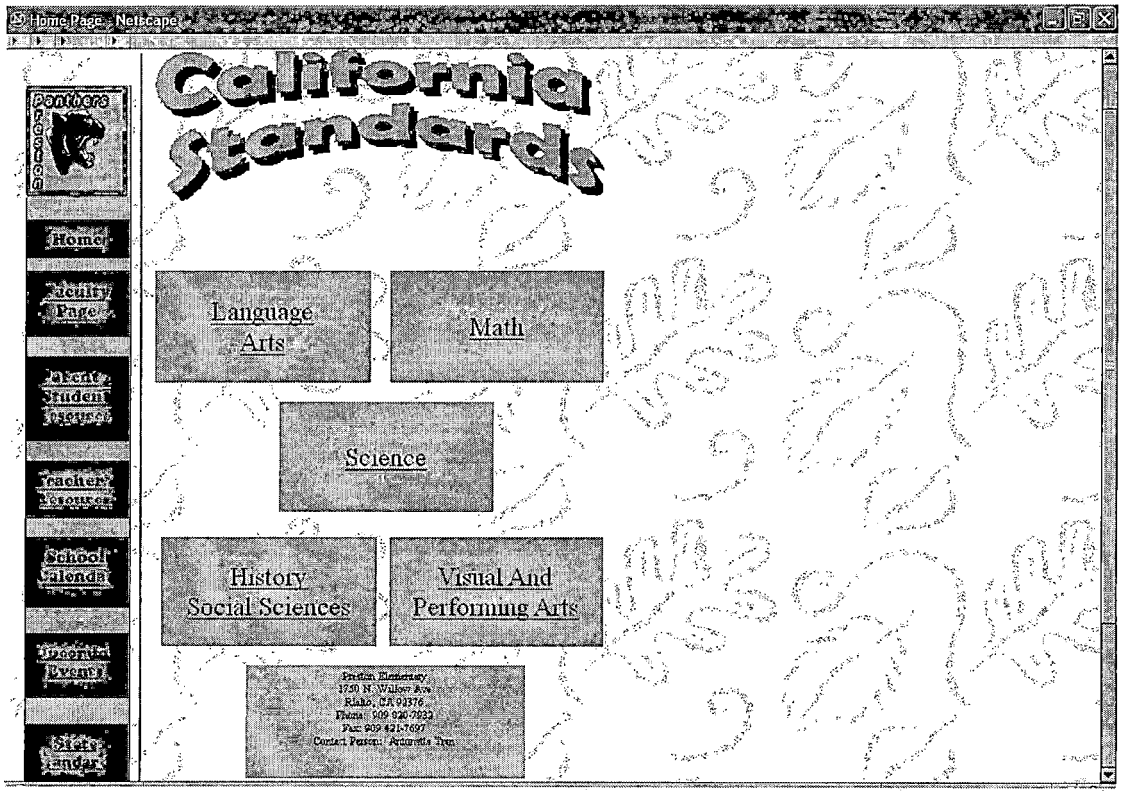

Faculty Page
Panthers Preston
Home
Faculty Page
Student Resources
Teachers Corner
School Calendar
Parents Events
State Standards
Yellow Track
Kindergarten
Mrs. Hanks-Grandia
Ms. Taylor
First Grade
Mrs. Wallace
Mrs. Thompson
Second Grade
Ms. Tran
Ms. Thornton
Third Grade
Mrs. Keiningham
Mrs. Cannon
Fourth Grade
Mr. Woodgrift
Fifth Grade
Mr. Montgomery
Principal
Erick Witherspoon
Elementary Administrator
Terri Thomas
Blue Track
Kindergarten
Mrs. Ayala
Mrs. Gonzales
First Grade
Mrs. Q-Hernandez
Ms. Quiel
Second Grade
Mr. Duke
Mrs. Alcaraz
Third Grade
Mrs. Lule
Mrs. Anda-Torres
Fourth Grade
Mr. Mullane
Mr. Kovich
Fifth Grade
Mr. Fuentes
Green Track
Kindergarten
Ms. Curl
Ms. Duke
First Grade
Ms. Overby
Second Grade
Mrs. Greenland
Ms. Morales
Third Grade
Ms. Tut
Mrs. Esquibel
Fourth Grade
Mr. Balogun
Fifth Grade
Mr. Robinson
Red Track
Kindergarten
Mrs. Cerny
First Grade
Mrs. Smith
Mrs. Norton
Second Grade
Ms. Rollins
Mrs. Pedroza
Third Grade
Mrs. Liptak
Mrs. McGuire
Fourth Grade
Mr. Buchsbam
Fifth Grade
Mrs. Harris
Preston Elementary
1750 N. Willow Ave
Rialto, CA 92376
Phone: 909 820-7932
Fax: 909 421-7697
Contact Person: Antonieta Tran

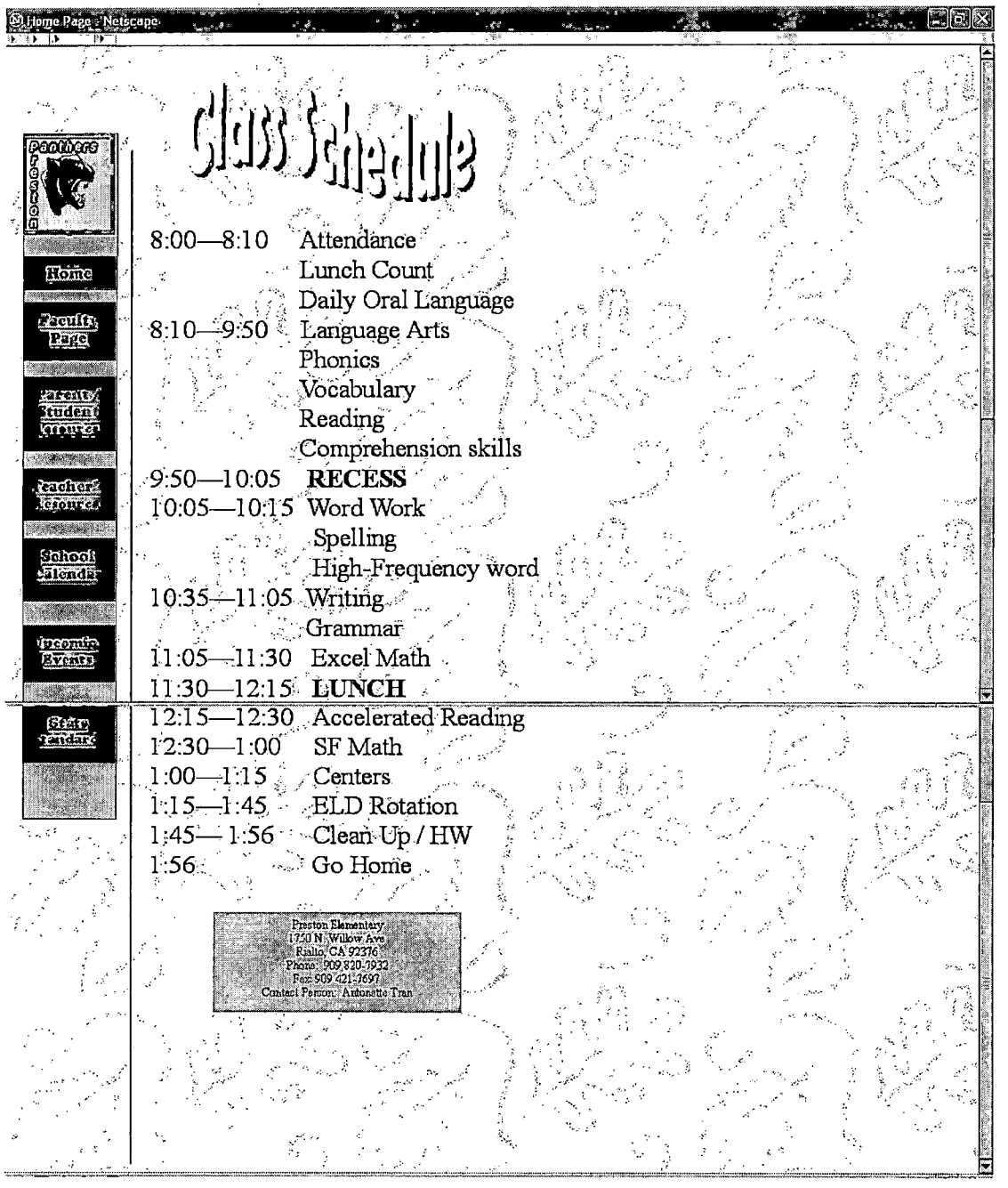

Page Title - Netscape
Parent and Student Resource Page
Panthers
Home
Faculty Page
Parent/ Student Resources
Teacher Resources
School Calendar
Upcoming Events
There are numerous of websites that you can go to get help on your homework. You can also get extra work on the web if you are having trouble with any subject area.
Reading
www.funbrain.com
www.bigchalk.com
www.readinglady.com
www.succeedtoread.com
www.understandmore.com
www.kid-lit.com/search.htm

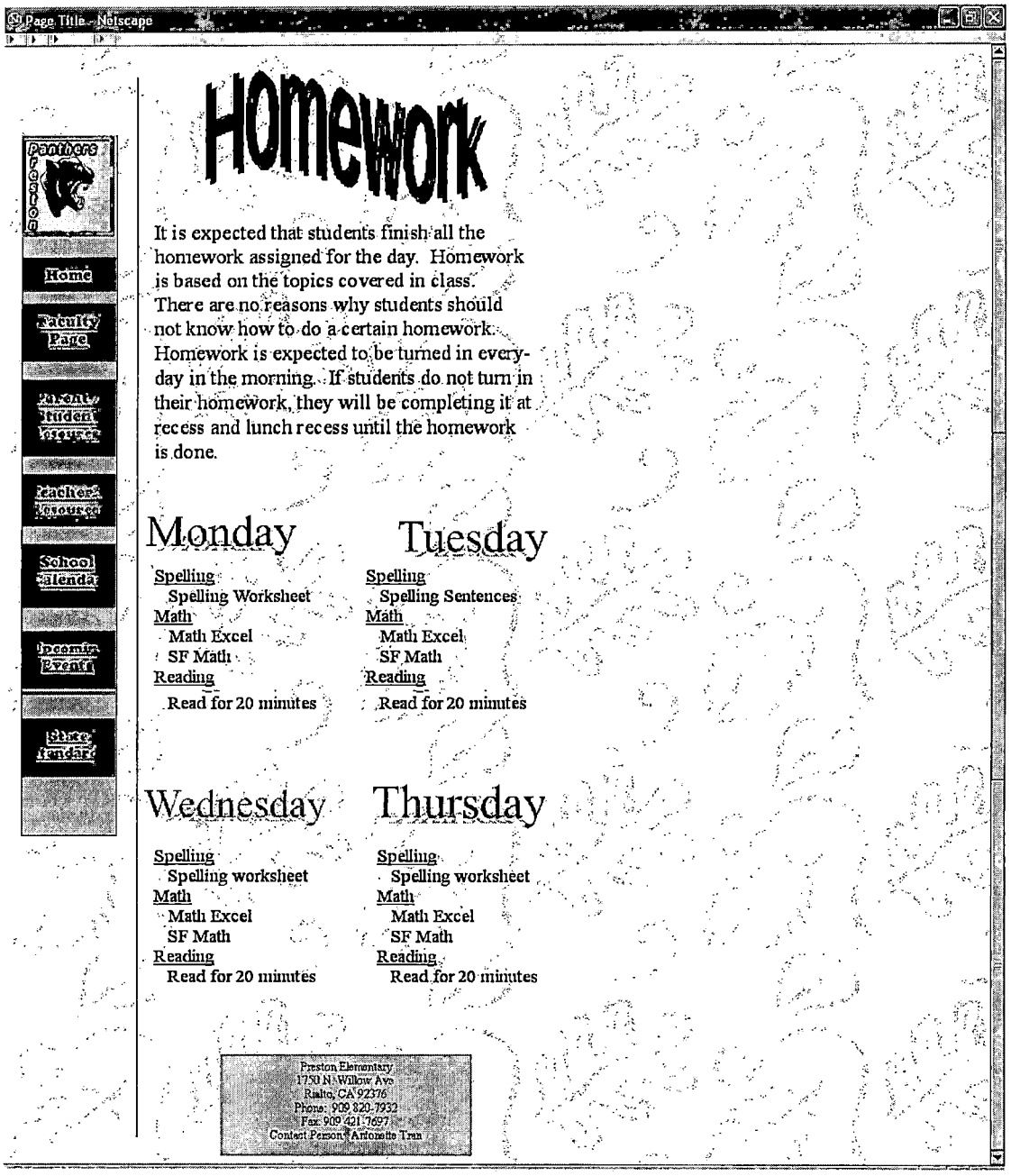

Page Title - Netscape
Teachers' Resource Page
Panthers
Home
Faculty Page
Teacher's Resource
School Calendar
Important Dates
Poor Work Notice
1st Paperwork
Attendance Notice

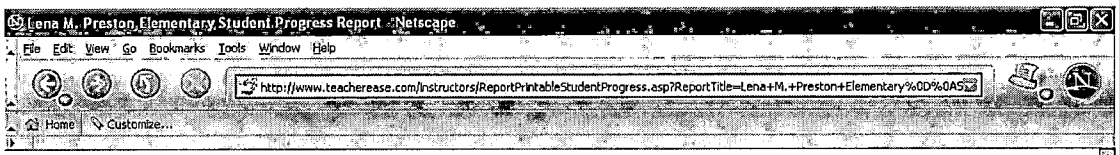

Home Page - Netscape
School Calendar
RIALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT - 2004/2005 SCHOOL CALENDAR
Home
JULY
AUGUST
SEPTEMBER
OCTOBER
NOVEMBER
DECEMBER
JANUARY
FEBRUARY
MARCH
APRIL
MAY
JUNE
Done


Page Title - Netscape
Panthers Focus
Home
Faculty Page
Student Resources
Teacher Resources
School Calendar
Upcoming Events
State Standards
Ms. Tran's
Second Grade Class
Welcome to our class homepage!!!
This month our class will be learning about whales and other sea animals. Students will also have an opportunity to see live animals and some bone structures of whales and other sea animals at the end of the month. We are looking forward to a representative from the museum coming to our class to talk and show us something about sea life. This will be an exciting month. If any parents would like to help out in our classroom feel free to drop by.
Online Grades
Homework
Class Schedule
Students' Work
State Standards
Preston Elementary
1750 N. Willow Ave
Rialto, CA 92376
Phone: 909 820-7930
Fax: 909 421-7697
Contact Person: Antonette Tran


Home Page - Netscape
California Standards
Panthers
Home
Faculty Page
Parent Student Resources
Teacher Resources
School Calendar
Special Events
Staff Handbook
Language Arts
Math
Science
History Social Sciences
Visual And Performing Arts


Home Page - Netscape
Class Schedule
Panthers
Preston
Home
Faculty Page
Parents Student Resources
Teacher Resources
School Calendar
Upcoming Events
Staff Calendar
8:00—8:10 Attendance
Lunch Count
Daily Oral Language
8:10—9:50 Language Arts
Phonics
Vocabulary
Reading
Comprehension skills
9:50—10:05 RECESS
10:05—10:15 Word Work
Spelling
High-Frequency word
10:35—11:05 Writing
Grammar
11:05—11:30 Excel Math
11:30—12:15 LUNCH
12:15—12:30 Accelerated Reading
12:30—1:00 SF Math
1:00—1:15 Centers
1:15—1:45 ELD Rotation
1:45— 1:56 Clean Up / HW
1:56 Go Home
Preston Elementary
1750 N. Willow Ave
Rialto, CA 92376
Phone: 909 820-7932
Fax: 909 421-7697
Contact Person: Antonette Tran


Page Title - Netscape
Panthers
Home
Faculty Page
Parent/Student Resource
Teacher Resource
School Calendar
Upcoming Events
Site Standards
Homework
It is expected that students finish all the homework assigned for the day. Homework is based on the topics covered in class. There are no reasons why students should not know how to do a certain homework. Homework is expected to be turned in everyday in the morning. If students do not turn in their homework, they will be completing it at recess and lunch recess until the homework is done.
Monday
Spelling
Spelling Worksheet
Math
Math Excel
SF Math
Reading
Read for 20 minutes
Tuesday
Spelling
Spelling Sentences
Math
Math Excel
SF Math
Reading
Read for 20 minutes
Wednesday
Spelling
Spelling worksheet
Math
Math Excel
SF Math
Reading
Read for 20 minutes
Thursday
Spelling
Spelling worksheet
Math
Math Excel
SF Math
Reading
Read for 20 minutes
Preston Elementary
1750 N Willow Ave
Rialto, CA 92376
Phone: 909 820-7932
Fax: 909 421-7697
Content Person: Antonette Tran



Summary

Term	Class	Instructor	Current Score
2004-05 T1	Dictation	Tran	94.8%=A

Grading Scale			
A	90	D	60
B	80	F	0
C	70		

Details for 2004-05 T1 Dictation

Date Due	Assignment	Possible Points	Score	%	Letter Grade	Instructor Comments (optional)
7/16/2004	Spelling Review	100	96	96%	A	
7/23/2004	Dragon Gets By	100	95	95%	A	
7/30/2004	Julius	100	94	94%	A	
8/6/2004	Mrs. Brown Went to Town	100	90	90%	A	
8/13/2004	Theme 1 Review	100	98	98%	A	
8/20/2004	Henry and Mudge	100	97	97%	A	
8/27/2004	Exploring Parks With Ranger Dock	100	95	95%	A	
9/3/2004	Spelling Review	100	87	87%	B	
10/8/2004	Around the Pond	100	94	94%	A	
10/15/2004	Theme 2 Review	100	98	98%	A	
10/22/2004	Chinatown	100	97	97%	A	
10/29/2004	A Trip to the Firehouse	100	95	95%	A	
11/5/2004	Big Bushy Mustache	30	27	90%	A	
11/19/2004	Jamaica Louise James	32	32	100%	A	
12/3/2004	Theme 3 Review	40	40	100%	A	
12/10/2004	Review	37	35	94.6%	A	
	Total	**1339**	**1270**	**94.8%**	**A**	

Missing/Incomplete Work

Date Due	Subject	Assignment	Possible Points	Your Score	Instructor Comments (optional)
This student has no incomplete work.					

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